



PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): Teruaki MATSUSHIMA et al.

Application No.: 10/786,414

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Conf. No.: 2798

Group Art Unit: 2873

Examiner: Thomas, Brandi N.

Title: LENS BARREL

Attorney Docket No.: 87900D-000519/US

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January 3, 2006

COMMENTS ON REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Sir:

In reply to the Notice of Allowance mailed October 3, 2005, the following comments are submitted in connection with the above-identified application.

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 remain allowed in connection with the present application.

In the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance, the Examiner quotes limitations of independent claims 1 and 3, but references each of claims 1-20, including additional independent claim 12. Instead of limiting the first statement to only claims 1 and 3, the

Examiner applies the statements to each of claims 1-20. Applicants submit these comments to ensure that independent claim 12, and all claims dependent thereon, is not in any way limited by the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance.

While Applicants agree that each of independent claims 1, 3, and 12 distinguish from the prior art and are allowable over the art of record, each of independent claims 1, 3, and 12 should be interpreted only by the limitations present therein. Applicants do not dispute the fact that the prior art fails to teach or suggest "a lens barrel" as indicated by the Examiner. But the limitations set forth are present in only claims 1 and 3, not in independent claim 12. Thus, claim 12 should not be interpreted as requiring any of the language quoted by the Examiner since this language does not address the limitations present in independent claim 12 (for example, claim 12 does not reference a helicoidal screw and thus should not be limited as such). Accordingly, these Comments are submitted herewith to ensure that independent claim 12, and each of the claims dependent thereon, are not limited by the Examiner's statements in any way and are limited only by the limitations present therein. Further, claims 1 and 3 are separate independent claims and should not, in any way, be limited by limitations present in one claim and not present in the other.

CONCLUSION

Applicants' claims should be limited only by the terms utilized therein. Thus, Applicants hereby submit these Comments on the Examiner's Reasons for Allowance in an effort to ensure that the claims are not improperly construed based upon limitations not present therein and/or to ensure that the claims are not interpreted so as to include any additional claim limitations.

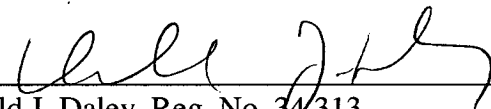
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Donald J. Daley, Reg. No. 34,313 at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY, & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By


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